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by rank
May 1974

INSTRUCTIONS FOR MISSION TO ARGENTINA

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1. The purpose of the mission of the Under Secretary for Political Affairs is to try to effect a change in United States relations with Argentina, a key state in Latin America.

2. United States relations with Argentina are at a crossroads due to continuing violations of human rights by the country and the resultant deterioration in our security relationships.

3. Argentina is particularly important to the United States because it is Latin America's leading nuclear technology state, with very advanced plans for the production of plutonium through reprocessing. Argentina also has a growing arms production and export capability, and is one of the most influential political and cultural leaders in the Spanish speaking world. Its present (world's 4th largest wheat exporter) and potentially far more impressive agricultural role, as well as possibly immense offshore petroleum prospects ensure Argentina's importance into the future.

4. The President, the Secretary of State, a growing number of Members of Congress as well as informed Americans are concerned about the course of events in Argentina, and the impact of these events on our human rights, non-proliferation, economic and military interests.

5. The Mission will serve to underline the United States desire for an improvement in bilateral relations. The Under Secretary would emphasize the problems which currently prevent fully normal relations and, depending on the Argentine response, state that the United States is prepared to be responsive, including with respect to Argentine requests for arms and training.

6. The Under Secretary will advise the Argentine Government that present practices in Argentina make it politically, and in some cases legally, difficult for the United States to follow through with previous military programs. We consider that the following practices and policies are at the root of the problem:

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

(X) Release () Excise () Deny

Exemption(s): _____

Declassify: () In Part (X) In Full

() Classify as () Extend as () Downgrade to

Date _____ Declassify on _____ Reason _____

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- irregular detention procedures, that is, the practice of secret arrests, disappearances and summary executions of ~~the~~ (memo attached);
- large numbers of prisoners under prolonged detention without charge or recourse to due process;
- the persecution of members of the judiciary and of those members of the legal profession who defend political prisoners exacerbating the lack of legal remedies and due process;
- standard practice of torture, brutality and psychological abuse of political prisoners (memo attached);
- the limited "right of option" for political prisoners under executive detention;
- and a wide variety of restrictions on religious, political, press and labor activities (specifically, the arrests and disappearances of political and labor leaders; prohibitions on political and union activities; constraints on the press, including punitive short-term closings and arrests of many journalists; official harassment of religious groups, in particular the Jehovah's Witnesses and other sects denied government registration, and reports of incidents of anti-semitism targeted at members of the Jewish community and Jewish prisoners.)

7. If appropriate, the Under Secretary would continue that the United States believes the following are examples of the kinds of actions which we feel would contribute tangibly to an improved atmosphere for government-to-government relations:

- A promise and perceptible action by President Videla to curtail the irregular detention and abduction practices of the security forces.

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- An end to torture and mistreatment of prisoners.
- An accounting of those who have disappeared -- or at least those about whom information is known.
- The establishment of a timetable for promptly charging and fairly trying (preferably in civilian courts) or releasing those held under executive authority, in particular those not suspected of violence.
- The establishment of numerical goals by the Argentine Military Review Board for Right of Option for the release each month of a significant number of persons from executive custody.
- The actual release of a considerable number of prisoners from executive custody -- either freed or remanded to civilian or military courts -- ~~by August 1. We have in mind action on perhaps 500 cases.~~
- ~~The release of another tangible number of prisoners (for example, 500 additional cases) by September 15.~~ *at an early date - and continuing process.*
- An undertaking to continue this process so that ~~during 1978 the Argentine government will release, grant right of option to, fairly try, or schedule for trial, in civilian or military courts, all remaining executive prisoners~~ *by the end of 1979.*
- The enforcement of procedures to investigate at a high level allegations of security personnel involvement in future disappearances and torture, to try those who engage in, or are otherwise responsible for such practices, and to punish those found guilty.

8. The Under Secretary will, on the basis of their replies to the foregoing, inform the Argentines that as they take action on improving human rights, we will respond, in a calibrated, sequential fashion.

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9. The Under Secretary may inform the Argentine Government that as human rights improvements are taken in the above mentioned areas, the United States will begin to consider favorable action, in a calibrated manner, on pending aspects of the military relationship. These include the purchase of military training safety related equipment, spare parts for previously supplied items, and items previously approved for sale or financing or needed to fulfill previously approved contracts.

10. If in early 1979, it is evident publicly that all prisoners have been removed from executive custody, and that there has been a resolution of the problem of violations of the rights of the person, including political prisoners, disappearances, torture and due process, and that some beginning steps have been taken toward restoration of civil and political liberties, the Administration would move to counteract the Kennedy/Humphrey Amendment.

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